

THIRD PARTY TALK

By FRANK CHODOROV

THERE IS SOME TALK — not much more than a whisper as yet — about launching a third political party. Nothing new, of course; throughout our history reformers have sought to gain control of the reins of government in order to put their cherished reforms into effect. This time the urge for a third party springs from the realization that neither of the major parties show any inclination to curtail the power of government or to curb its appetite for intervention. Hence, there must be, so the proponents declare, a third party, one that will offer the public a chance to register its opposition to what both major parties are offering.

The odd thing about third party movements is that they have often succeeded in getting their reforms accepted, but have never succeeded in reaching their political goal. Sometimes the Republican Party is pointed to as the exception — the one third party that rose to the top. In point of fact, however, the Republican Party was not exactly a third party. It was the residuary legatee of the Whig Party, which had cracked up on the slavery question and, by 1856, was about to give up the ghost. What was left of it was augmented by the Free Soilers, the Know Nothings, the American Party, the Independent Democrats and several other groups that aspired to succession. The amalgam formed the *second* party.

The story of the origin of the Republican Party should give pause to those who advocate the organization of a new party these days. If either, or both, of the two present political camps were to be shattered on a major issue, and the oft-talked about realignment of politicians were effected, then we could have a recurrence of the miracle of 1856. But, that kind of issue has not made its appearance and therefore the realignment remains a consummation devoutly to be wished. Under the circumstances, the first thing for the dissidents to do is to define and agree upon an issue; if it takes root with the voters and flowers into a revolt at local polls, a *second* party might emerge, even as it did once before.

That seems to be the only competence for a third party movement: to create an issue. The strong two-party tradition in this country is most difficult to penetrate on a national scale, particularly because the politicians, taking advantage of this tradition, have put legal barriers in the way of prospective competition. In some states it is practically impossible for a new party to get its name or the names of its candidates on the official ballot, and in all states the job is most difficult and expensive. But, when the people of a community get riled up on some issue (like prohibition), this handicap can be overcome, and

a third party can cut some figure in the local elections. That's all it can do — but it is enough.

NO POLITICAL MOVEMENT can take on a head of steam without a clear-cut and simple issue. Not even an important "name" can replace this requirement; one of the least effective third party ventures, in that it left little imprint on government policy, was that headed by Theodore Roosevelt in 1912. Despite its glamorous leadership, and a platform that catered to every dissatisfied element in the country, and its "Onward Christian Soldiers" fervor, the Progressive Party fizzled out after it caused the defeat of William Howard Taft. It lacked definiteness of purpose.

The importance of a single issue was demonstrated in the birth of the Republican Party. There were all kinds of reforms in the wind in those days — as when are there not? — from nativism, with its strong accent on anti-Catholicism, to cheap money and prohibition. But, no matter what special enthusiasm engaged the efforts of any particular group, all were agreed, not on abolition, but on the non-extension of slavery. On that point there was near unanimity. So much so that no politician above the Mason-Dixon line could hope for preferment if he did not put this doctrine first in his credo.

As against such singleness of purpose, the third party talk today is as vague as a doctrinal thesis, as generalized as an international agreement, as uncertain as a "blind date". When you read the letters or printed matter put out by these energumens, you ask yourself, what specifically are these folks for? Or against, for that matter. They are strong for constitutional government; but in that respect they do not differ from Democrats, Republicans or any other group of Americans. They say they are against socialism, but they do not define the term; would they advocate, for instance, the abolition of the public school, which is as socialistic in essence as the socialized medicine they decry? They are for "free enterprise"; yet they say nothing about free trade, without which enterprise can hardly be described as free.

There is a wide and increasing apprehension about the "trend toward socialism". Now, the cardinal principal of socialism is the denial of the sanctity of private property. All brands of socialism are agreed that the right of ownership does not adhere in the individual, and that society, acting through government, has a valid claim on all that is produced. Well, when the Sixteenth Amendment was incorporated into our Constitution in 1913, this socialistic principle became an American principle. The government today confiscates through income taxation more than a quarter of all our earnings, often before we even see them. And the laws based on this Amendment declare that what we may keep for ourselves is fixed by the will of the government; there is nothing in the laws that stops the government from taking the milk from babies' bottles.

If the third party folks are really against socialism they would begin by attacking income taxation; they could come out for repeal of the Sixteenth Amendment. We have

heard little along these lines. And yet, when you think of it, the much-hated "trend" would vanish without trace if the government lost the power to tax incomes. Without these revenues the government would simply be compelled to drop all the indicia of the "trend" — the handouts, the interventions, subsidies and subventions, and the swollen bureaucracy. In fact, the government would be reduced to minding its own and proper business, which is the protection of life and property.

IT MIGHT BE SAID that there is no such all-absorbing popular interest today comparable to the slavery issue of 1856, and that therefore no opposition party could get a following if it confined itself to one purpose; it must distribute fly paper indiscriminately so as to catch all the malcontents. This is a fallacy, arising from the idea that the goal of a third party is to unseat one of the entrenched parties by force of numbers and regardless of issues. This is the wrong idea. None of the third parties that have sprung up in this country has ever come near getting control of the reins of government, and yet a number of them have played a part, often a decisive part, in shaping the policies of the major parties, and therefore of our national government. That is the real, and only, function of the third party.

Every plank in the Democratic and Republican parties, and every policy law that was passed under their respective regimes, can be traced to the influence of some third party movement, usually long after the third party had disappeared. Indeed, both of these organizations have thrived by what they appropriated from the advocates of reform, not on what they originated. The fact that they are so alike in all but name proves that they have drawn their intellectual sustenance from the same sources. To stay in power, which is the first business of the politician, it is necessary that he fall in with, and then head, the stampedes started by the reformers, regardless of whether he knows what the stampede is about. It is this necessity that caused the transmutation of the two major parties into something far different from their beginnings, and channelled them into a single-party system. The third parties did it.

The principal plank in the most vociferous of the numerous nineteenth century third parties, the Peoples Party, better known as the Populists, was cheap money. Like all (but one) of these reform movements, the Populists demanded a congeries of laws, adding plank to plank with the hope of attracting more voters. But, the banner it held highest was money devaluation, or inflation, in one form or another. To the impecunious West this was the panacea.

The Democrats, heeding the returns at many local elections, appropriated this enthusiasm in 1896 and came up with their ingenious inflationary formula of 16 to 1. They knew exactly how to give the people the cheap money they were clamoring for. After the first Bryan campaign one never heard of the Populists again. For various reasons, the demand for cheap money died down and not until the regime of Franklin D.

Roosevelt did the Democrats redeem their cheap money pledge. The seed sown by the Populists — and the Greenback Party before them — bore fruit under different husbandry.

The only third party that stuck close to a one-plank platform was the Prohibition Party. It also did a lot of local plowing before it ventured into the national arena, and achieved notable successes in towns, counties and states, usually by pressuring Democratic and Republican politicians into taking up their crusade. Fortuitous circumstances, which always play an important part in the fortunes of politics, enabled them to constitutionalize their “noble experiment”, as Republican President Hoover called it, during the regime of Democratic President Wilson. The Prohibition Party was eminently successful.

The most successful of all the third party movements was the Socialist Party — including its splints. It not only infiltrated and ultimately captured the two major parties, but along the way it supplied several other third parties with reasons for existence. The Populists were perhaps the first to dig into the socialistic grab bag for planks, coming up in 1892 with the one of deepest socialist hue — the “soak the rich” graduated income tax. The Progressive Party and the Farmer-Labor Party were most indebted to the socialists.

The two major parties, all the while decrying the Marxist doctrine as alien and vicious, waited until the socialists got up a furor with it, and then they adopted it as their very own. It became American doctrine. In 1908 a Republican regime introduced the Sixteenth Amendment, and in 1913 a Democratic regime welcomed it into the Constitution, after enough Democratic and Republican state legislatures had ratified it. With this necessary instrument for socialization at hand, the three succeeding Republican administrations passed a series of measures that fitted in with the best the Socialist Party had to offer, and at long last a Democratic Administration completed the appropriation. In recent years the Socialist Party evaporated. There is no longer any need for this third party; it has done its work, and well.

THE THIRD PARTY is an essential element in the American political scheme. Its function is to supply ideas to the two major parties. Without the third party to irritate them into some thought, the two parties must settle down to engaging into periodic tussles for control of the government, with the issue decided by the relative size of their campaign chests. In this tug-of-war, of course, no third party can have a place.

But, for a third party to succeed, it must tie its kite to some simple, clearly-expressed, easily-understood, radical and thoroughly “impossible” idea. We can depend on the major parties to espouse the obvious, the innocuous, the prosaic; they have no business with anything else. It is the function of the third party to jar the voter, and through him to influence the major parties, with something out of the ordinary. Perhaps the idea that will catch on — and if it does it will help reverse the trend toward socialism that the third partyites view with alarm — is: “Repeal the Sixteenth Amendment”.

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German Election: Two aspects of Chancellor Adenauer's overwhelming victory forcibly strike realistic observers in Washington:

(1) The victory was in large part due to the domestic prosperity which the West Germans have enjoyed under Adenauer's reign — a fact little-noticed in our press. This prosperity was the result of the free enterprise policies of Economics Minister Ludwig Erhard, of Adenauer's cabinet. A proponent of classical economics, Erhard enabled West Germany to rise from the post-war rubble by abolishing restrictions and controls and letting the natural forces of the nation renew themselves through the free market. The majority given to Adenauer is a mandate for "free enterprise".

(2) The West German Republic looms as our strongest and most reliable partner in Europe. Adenauer's regime stands in brilliant contrast to a dismal background which includes the virtual collapse of the European Defense Community (EDC) and the enfeeblement of NATO, not to mention the various craven postures of the British, French and Italian Governments. While the latter cringed before Soviet Russia, Adenauer defied Malenkov's pre-election threats.

In view of all this, military circles here are privately asking the question — why should we not have a direct, bi-lateral military alliance with the West German Republic?

Such a relationship in this form would be in harmony with much current military thinking, for the tendency now in the Pentagon is to favor bi-lateral over multi-lateral commitments. The latter have not turned out well of late, *vide* the UN and NATO; multi-lateral pacts and organizations simply give the other members a chance to "gang up" and outvote the U.S., as we have seen to our sorrow in the case of Korea and the UN. Hence, the advantage of a bi-lateral pact or treaty — an arrangement between just two powers — is obvious.

Therefore, instead of trying to bolster up NATO or EDC, a bi-lateral pact with West Germany, and separate pacts with other nations, if the latter are willing, would best serve our national interests. We could deal with each in turn, wielding our vast financial power to the most telling effect. Today, the pending bi-lateral treaty with Spain is a straw in the wind. In the eyes of military men, it is the method best suited to the present world situation.

Apart from these two highly important reactions, the German election has provoked other interesting observations. One is that it should put an end to the extraordinary type of journalism as practiced in the *New York Times* dealing with the alleged growth and importance of "neo-Nazi" parties and movements in West Germany. For some years, reading the *Times* dispatches from Germany, one might expect the advent of a new Hitler and a mass swastika party to be imminent. In the election this week, these little parties failed to elect even one seat in Parliament.

The outcome at the polls should also put a quietus on the various "hate-German" racketeers and their groups which have flourished in New York and the East, who claimed that the Germans are not racially fit for self-government. This myth of Germans who prefer to follow a leader rather than to think for themselves never had much foundation; in HUMAN EVENTS, on Feb. 7, 1951, Dr. Gerda Crosby in a piece entitled *The Myth of "Undemocratic Germany"* well answered and discredited such prevalent theories, the fruit of war propaganda. Now the election has blown the myth up in smoke.

Dulles: The Secretary of State in the past forty-eight hours has emerged as victor, not only over the German Socialists, but also over his own Undersecretary, General Walter Bedell ("Beetle") Smith. When Dulles, a week ago, publicly plumped for the election of Adenauer and his party over the Socialist opposition in West Germany, the latter attacked him and tried to exploit this "interference" at the hustings. They lost. And so did "Beetle".

The Undersecretary (as we first reported on June 3, 1953) has nourished hopes of unseating Dulles and taking his place, counting on his old "army-tie" friendship with Eisenhower. Recently C. D. Jackson, another White House favorite with much influence over the President, has reportedly joined the Smith cabal against Dulles. Jackson, like "Beetle", is said to be an appeaser in foreign policy, pro-British and in favor of the ideas of Dean Acheson. Dulles reportedly has opposed both Smith and Jackson on many points.

Hence, friends of the cabal fed out stories that Eisenhower had "called Dulles on the carpet" for the "boner" of publicly backing Adenauer against the Socialists. Actually, the Secretary of State had scheduled his trip to Denver to see the President several days in advance of his famous remarks about the German election. But meanwhile, the Acheson "holdovers" in the State Department — incensed by Dulles' "treat-em-rough" speech against the Chinese Communists given before the American Legion convention — fed the chorus of "horrified" criticism of Dulles' "diplomatic blunder".

The smashing victory of Adenauer over the Socialists has apparently poured some cold water over the ardor of the anti-Dulles cabal. It has given hope to conservatives who — whatever their reservations about the Secretary — deem him preferable to "Beetle" Smith.

Supreme Court: The death of Chief Justice Vinson has inspired the usual sweepstakes about a successor. "What a successor" might be the comment about the favorite of the dopesters — Governor Earl Warren of California. Warren has no bench background and we have never heard of any encomiums about his store of legal knowledge. Politician — yes; jurist — no.

However, one name has popped up that deserves some backing; it is that of Chief Justice Arthur T. Vanderbilt of the Supreme Court of New Jersey, who has an excellent reputation as a jurist. (Also, he's a Republican.) It would help restore the prestige of the High Court if such a man were appointed.

Defense: Secretary of Defense Charles Wilson has apparently developed such a sensitive skin — as a result of charges that he is ruining our Air Force — that he now evidently fears to release publicly any announcement of further cuts under his own name.

That is the conclusion drawn from a story going the rounds in Washington about the latest Air Force cuts. The Air Force last week officially announced the cutting of approximately 965 planes from the budget, including 169 B-47's, our best bomber. Also, the Air Force publicly assumed responsibility for this cut. This latter fact looked suspicious, since only recently the Air Force had protested violently against the famous \$5 billion cut. Hence the story about town offers the best explanation, as follows: that Wilson ordered the Air Force Command to make the cut and to take public responsibility for it. No one here believes that the Air Force Command did so willingly. Maybe it will take the heat off Wilson.

Inside State Department: We learn from within the State Department that classified phone directories (containing the names and extension numbers of bureaucrats, according to their respective divisions and sections) will perhaps be discontinued or at least heavily censored hereafter. The reason: HUMAN EVENTS story of July 29, in which we utilized State phone books to illustrate how there has been little or no change in the personnel in State. We took the November, 1952 book (when Acheson

Who Do You Know: Or, should it be whom? Anyhow, you know at least one person who ought to be reading HUMAN EVENTS. Send us his name and address, so that we may contact him. A hundred names would be better. (We promise not to mention your name in writing prospects.)

was still Secretary) and compared it with the July, 1953 book. Whole divisions and sections had rosters identical in both books.

Now we learn that an avalanche of mail descended on the White House and State Department from outraged GOP readers who had believed that the Eisenhower Administration would "clean out" Mr. Acheson's reservation. Hence, the plan either to discontinue the classified portion of the next phone directory or to censor the names. As to the latter, we hear that some "controversial" figures in State's bureaucracy are now asking that their names be taken out of all portions of the next book.

Student Campaign: Last year the Intercollegiate Society of Individualists started a "fifty year project" to keep the concepts of limited government and the free economy alive among college students. In one way and another, the names of some interested 600 students were assembled. Nearly 8,000 pieces of literature — most of it contributed by the Foundation for Economic Education — were mailed to these students.

In June, a final questionnaire was sent to the list. More than half the number asked that they be continued on the list for the term beginning in September. Others advised that they were graduating, were entering the army or did not know where they would be in the Fall.

ISI plans to service at least one thousand students who want to know the answer to collectivism. Names are wanted. Readers of HUMAN EVENTS are requested to send names of sons, daughters or friends who are going to college this month (and their mail addresses during the college term) to Intercollegiate Society of Individualists, 1835 K Street, N.W., Washington 6, D. C.

Millions for Evasion: The Internal Revenue Bureau reports that its doorbell ringing campaign in Boston is bringing results; for every dollar invested in this search for tax evaders it is garnering, it says, some \$25 in unpaid taxes. In San Francisco, its agents have been visiting, on a door-to-door basis, business establishments (that is, cobblers, barbers, second-hand clothes dealers and such) in search of the Holy Grail. A mail campaign is under way in Denver, where 7,000 concerns listed in the classified telephone book are receiving, according to a report in the *Wall Street Journal*, letters asking them why they did not file income tax reports; Internal Revenue Director George H. Allen is reported as asserting that "2,000 are most likely to be evaders." Quite a percentage!

This flushing out process is likely to produce some results. It is a known fact that whenever the IRB catches an important tax evader the ensuing publicity brings in a lot of "revised" income tax reports and a lot of checks. So, the campaigns in Boston, Denver and San Francisco should bestir evaders neither visited or written to; fear of discovery will prod them into paying up.

This spurt of snooping cannot be continued indefinitely, for the Bureau simply does not have agents enough to keep up with the evaders, and if it hired the number necessary to cover the country day in and day out the cost would exceed the returns. There are too many evaders; the income tax laws do not enjoy popularity.

Yet evasion is no answer to an unpopular law. It is a defiance of law and order; it is cowardly. If those who dislike the income tax were to put up a substantial sum of money for a campaign to repeal the income tax amendment, they might make some progress. In any case, they would be honestly performing a civic duty.

Foreign Policy Without Fear. By Vera Micheles Dean. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company. \$3.75. Reviewed by William Henry Chamberlin.

If this book is remembered at all, it is likely to be remembered as a classical example of the school of thought and writing known as anti-anti-Communism. The "fear" which Mrs. Dean wishes to exorcise is fear of the designs and intentions of the Soviet Union.

So, in a rambling, discursive survey of European and Asian politics and economics she contrives rather remarkably not to mention a single Soviet act or a single characteristic of the international Communist conspiracy which might reasonably arouse American apprehension and warrant suitable counter-measures. On the other hand, she conjures up some fears of her own that seem fantastically unreal, in the present state of the world.

A specialist in international affairs like Mrs. Dean should know that there are 175 Soviet divisions under arms and not one regiment of regular German troops. It is or should be a matter of general knowledge that Red China has militarized that vast country on an unheard of scale and has been liberally supplied with modern weapons, including jet planes, from the Soviet Union. Japan has only the skeleton of a defense force, very scantily supplied with modern arms.

Yet Mrs. Dean tries to convince her readers that the Russians "have a legitimate fear of another 1914 or another 1941, of new German threats to Moscow and Stalingrad". And she follows up this fantastic suggestion with another in the same category: that China and Russia need "safeguards against the revival of a militant Japan", although the plain facts of the situation certainly indicate that it is Japan that requires safeguards against a highly militarized Soviet Union and China.

This curious topsyturvy, upside-down view of the world in which we live persists throughout the book. There is much declamation against "witch hunting", unbalanced by any recognition that wizards named Hiss and witches named Coplon do exist and that, if one looks under enough beds, he may find someone answering to such names as Fuchs and Gold and Rosenberg. There is much denigration of men associated with the struggle against Communism in the Orient, such as Chiang Kai-shek, Bao Dai and Syngman Rhee. Nowhere, however, does Mrs. Dean face up to two very important questions: Are there any alternative anti-Communist leaders and would the interests of the Chinese, Koreans and Indo-Chinese and the national security of America be better served if Communists had been allowed to take over these countries?

Along with her pronounced aversion to any outspoken criticism of Communist intrigue and aggression Mrs. Dean is an enthusiast for socialism and for the United Nations. Ignoring the obvious impotence of the United Nations and its pitiful record in opposing aggression in Korea, Mrs. Dean would assign to this powerless and divided organization tasks for which it is conspicuously unfitted, such as the protection of Formosa.

She also sees in the United Nations an ideal funnel through which American taxpayers' money should be poured out for the benefit of "under-privileged" nations. Like Stringfellow Barr, she is convinced that America owes every Indian, Burmese, Indonesian, Pakistani, Lebanese, Iraqi, Egyptian, Israeli, Syrian, Moroccan, Libyan, etc., a living; and repeats with approval a suggestion that would make the average American grab his pocketbook: the proposal of a group of UN "experts" that nineteen billion dollars a year be spent for the indigent nations.

The distorted views on world affairs that characterize this book from beginning to end would be less important if Mrs. Dean were not in a strategic position to influence public opinion in her post as research director of the Foreign Policy Association, which has just received a grant of close to a million dollars from the Ford Foundation.

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